Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please insert the enclosed sequence listing into the specification.

Page 10, line 13, please replace this paragraph with the following paragraph:

Figure 1: Sequence information of 16S rRNA for five lactic acid utilizing strains: S D6 1L/1 (SEQ ID NO:7); SM 6/1 (SEQ ID NO:8); Ss3/4 (SEQ ID NO:9); and Ss2/1 and Ssc/2 (SEQ ID NO:10).

Page 22, lines 4-26, please replace this paragraph with the following paragraph:

Cell pellets from 1ml cultures grown on M2GSC medium (24h) that were resuspended in 50µl of sterile d.H_2O served as templates for PCR reactions (0.5µl per 50µl of PCR reactions). 16S rRNA sequences were amplified with a universal perimer set, corresponding to positions 8-27 (27f, forward primer AGAGTTTGATCMTGGCTCAG (SEQ ID NO:1)) and 1491-1511 (rP2, reverse primer ACGGCTACCTTGTTACGACTT (SEQ ID NO:2)) of the *Escherichia coli* numbering system (Brosius, 1978; Weisbgerg, 1991) with a $MgCL_2$ concentration of 1.5 mM. PCR amplifications were performed using the following conditions: initial denaturation (5 min at 94°C), then 30 cycles of denaturation (30 s at 94°C), annealing (30 s at 51°C), and elongation (2 min at 72°C), and a final extension (10 min at 72°C). The amplified PCR products were purified using QIA quick columns (Qiagen GmbH, Germany) according to manufacturer's instructions and directly sequenced using a capillary sequencer (Beckman) with primers 27f, rP2, 519f (CAGCMGCCGCGGTAATWC) (SEQ ID NO:3) and 519r (GWATTACCGCGGCKGCTG) (SEQ ID NO:4) (corresponding to positions 518-535 of the *E. coli* numbering system) and 926f (AAACTCAAAKGAATTGACGG) (SEQ ID NO:5) and 926r (CCGTCAATTCMTTTRAGTTT) (SEQ ID NO:6) corresponding to positions 906-925. Two independent PCR products were sequenced per strain.